

***1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative, how it promotes high student achievement, and how it can be replicated.***

“The Crafty Caterers” is an innovative project of our high school’s Career Pathways program, a school-to-careers initiative designed to help students be better prepared to live and work in the twenty-first century. Students are responsible for the successful operation of: 1) a catering enterprise that holds a weekly luncheon for the faculty and visiting guests and 2) a crafts boutique that offers attractive and creative handicrafts to accent each season. 3) preparation of take-out meals for faculty. Proceeds of all enterprise are either returned to the Career Pathways Program to finance monthly vocational/technical, cultural and work-related field trips or donated to the school.

The faculty luncheon has been in existence for twenty years, tracing its origin to a “hands on” program originally designed to help EMR students learn social skills. With the institution of our Career Pathways program, the luncheon has evolved to be a consistent and much-awaited Thursday feature of our school. The program has been considerably refined over the years; the students have enlarged their role to cater small after-school meetings and district conferences. The Crafts Boutique, an outgrowth of a joint program with the art department, has provided a creative outlet for the students who design their creations, follow directions in their construction, and utilize merchandising techniques in offering them for sale. **The objectives of the “Crafty Caterers” are:**

- 1. To provide students with a real work situation for applying business, social and occupational skills learned in the classroom.***
- 2. To encourage students of varying abilities to work cooperatively with each other to achieve a goal.***
- 3. To help students develop a work ethic that will continue after they have left school.***
- 4. To participate in an interdisciplinary project that addresses the Core Curriculum Standards.***

Students in the Career Pathways Program represent different learning abilities; all have been identified by either guidance counselors, Child Study Team, Pupil Assistance Committee or parents as students who do best in a less traditional “life skills” program. Some are deemed “students at-risk for dropping out”; some may be part of a cluster program; others may be in resource room classes or follow a more traditional program for the rest of the day. Basically, the project is an organized and focused attempt for these students to carry into operation the workplace skills learned in “Career Pathways” class.

Students are responsible for planning the weekly luncheon, estimating costs, doing the marketing, preparing and cooking the food, setting the table and cleaning up, working the cash register, figuring their profit and loss. Each session is followed by a reflective session in which students exchange ideas and a journal article outlining what the student has learned from the experience. Likewise, designing and executing the crafts projects requires the students to apply skills learned in many subjects, such as measuring the model, estimating what is needed, determining the cost, devising the promotional techniques and analyzing consumer trends.

This practice spurs high student achievement because it trains the students to experience success in a real life work situation. The program has been presented at state Learn and Serve Conferences as well as Service-Learning Fair and received high praise. We have received an overwhelming response from students who have participated in the

luncheon as well as from faculty. Working in teams, students gain valuable experience in human relations as well as developing occupational skills. More than anything else, it keeps students motivated to stay in school. The retention rate for students engaged in “The Crafty Caterers” is excellent; in the last five years, no students in the program have dropped out of school.

**2. List the specific Core Curriculum Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.**

Many of the Cross Content Standards as well as those of mathematics and the language arts are addressed by this practice.

1. ***Applying business skills such as pricing, estimating, selling, figuring profit and loss***  
*Developing occupational skills:* Cross Content Workplace 1 (8); *Using computer, (technology):* CCW 2(1-10); *Solving everyday problems through math:* Math 4.1 (1-5); *Using calculators:* Math 4.5.
2. ***Observing appropriate employee behavior, e.g. punctuality, good attendance, effort, congeniality, completion of tasks.***  
*Developing occupational skills:* CCW 1 (1,3,5,6,8); CCW 3 (critical thinking); CCW 4 (Self-management); *Math problem-solving:* Math 4.1 (10-18); *Using cash register, calculator, computers:* CCW 2 (2); M 4.5 (9).
3. ***Working with a partner in designing art project, preparing for luncheon, projecting future plans.*** *Developing occupational skills:* CCW 1 (8); *Using technology:* CCW 2(1-10); *Critical thinking and Problem Solving:* CCW 3 (1-15); *Self-management skills and working in groups:* CCW 3 (1-11); *Math problem-solving:* M 4.1 (10-18); *Planning and executing crafts project:* Visual & Performing Arts1.6 (1-5).
4. ***Developing skills in dealing with customer.*** *Developing occupational skills:* CCW 1; *Addressing Audience:* Language Art Literacy 3.1 (8,9,18).
5. ***Writing daily journal about experience.*** *Self-management skills:* CCW 4 (1-4); *Developing occupational skills:* CCW 1 (1-3; 4-8); *Writing:* LAL 3.3 (18); *Developing critical thinking/problem solving in life experience:* CCW 3, Math 4.1
6. ***Providing valuable services for staff and students.*** *Developing occupational skills:* CCW 1 (1-3; 5-8); *Using technology:* CCW 2; M 4.5 (9); *Critical thinking:* CCW 3; *Self-management skills; cooperative work:* CCW 4; M 4.1.
7. ***Helping students to decide on a career by providing business work experience.***  
*Career Planning:* CCW 1 (4-7); *Deriving satisfaction through service:* CCW 1 (6).

3. *Describe the educational needs of students the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine if the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice meets these needs.*

**The educational needs of students that this practice addresses are:**

1. The necessity of providing a real work experience in which the students could put into action the principles they learn in class.
2. Opportunity to demonstrate employability skills such as honesty, work ethic, dependability, promptness and getting along with others.
3. The need to develop a feeling of success from productive work.
4. Practice in working cooperatively with others in diverse relationships: fellow employees; employers; customers.

**The assessment measures used to determine if the objectives/needs have been met:**

**OBJECTIVE #1: *To provide students with a real work situation for applying business, social and occupational skills learned in the classroom.* (NEED #1 – Real Work; NEED #2 – Employability Skills)**

- A. Retention Rate of students involved in “Crafty Caterers” - 100%, indicative of the seriousness with which they approach their work.
- B. Student Evaluation Surveys – indicating high degree of satisfaction.
- C. Faculty Evaluation Surveys of the catering enterprise – 100% satisfaction.
- D. Program presented as a model of School-to-Careers at Learn and Serve Conference at the College of NJ; State Service-Learning Fair at Rider College.

**OBJECTIVE #2: *To encourage students of varying abilities to work cooperatively with each other to achieve a goal* (NEED # 2- Getting Along; NEED #4 – Cooperative Relationships)**

- A. Students work in teams for the luncheon; keep journals. Also, portfolio of projects indicates a high level of success.
- B. Grades in Career Pathways. Ability to get along with others a component of mark. 70% of students in 2000-01 school year achieved a grade of B or better.

**OBJECTIVE #3: *To help students develop a work ethic that will continue after they have left school.* (NEED #3 – Achieving Success; NEED #1 – Real Work)**

- A. Follow-up Studies of graduates enrolled in Career Pathways Program indicates success: 15% of '01 graduates in the work force; 85% enrolled in technical/ vocational school.
- B. Personal testimonials in our award-winning National Service-Learning Leader School Portfolio from students who have participated in this practice. Many specifically refer to what they learned through the practice and how it changed their attitude towards school.

**OBJECTIVE #4: *To participate in an interdisciplinary project that addresses the Core Curriculum Standards.***

- A. Curriculum Standards addressed in Response #2.
- B. The following disciplines are represented in the practice: Consumer Science; Fine Arts; Mathematics; Language Arts; School-to-Work.

**4. Describe how you would replicate this practice in another school or district.**

1. Establishing “Crafty Caterers” is a practice best suited to a non-traditional career-oriented program that has kitchen facilities as well as an area that can be converted from class work to dining. If you have such a program or are designing one, work with Guidance in setting up blocked periods (3 in a row) with small class size.
2. Poll the faculty (may be informal) to see if they will attend a weekly luncheon; decide on the best day for the luncheon. Naturally, your school schedule will determine the number of lunch periods (we have three). Decide on the price (We charge \$3).
3. At the beginning of the term, explain to students that they will learn workplace skills through preparing a luncheon and designing and completing craft projects. Emphasize a work ethic, dependability and people skills.
4. The luncheon is planned one week in advance. The meal generally consists of a main dish (ziti, eggplant, chicken salad, tacos, sandwich, etc.), a green salad, dessert and a beverage. Faculty also places orders for take-home (cost: \$3). Sign up is required.
5. Marketing at the local supermarket is usually done on Monday, with the school bus reserved for our trip. Each student is responsible for articles on the list.
6. Actual preparation of the meal is usually done the day before the luncheon with each student assigned a specific task.
7. On the day of the luncheon, students follow a clearly defined format: Period 1: set-up tables, put food in oven, complete salad, make iced tea. Period 2: Students assigned different roles: manage cash register; serve salad; serve the main course; serve beverage, bus tables; reset tables; wash dishes (students alternate roles in next lunch period). Period 3: clean up, wash and put away dishes, pack take-out dinners for faculty; count money and determine profit/loss.
8. Students write a short, reflective journal on what they have learned. Each student receives an evaluation. Work performance is part of grade.
9. Seasonal crafts that are displayed at the luncheon and around the room are the most successful. Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukah, Easter and Mother’s Day provide opportunities for students to make wreaths, wood figurines, napkin holders, plaques and floral boxes. Usually, we set aside one day a week for this activity; also, we work in conjunction with the crafts teacher.
10. At the end of each year, poll the faculty to determine the degree of satisfaction and suggest changes. The close relationships that our faculty develops with these students is a strong advantage of this program. The students are proud that the school administrators and teachers know them by name and compliment them.
11. Keep a running balance of profits; students discuss what makes the venture successful. Profits are used to purchase art supplies and finance educational and career trips.
12. Once your program is set up, other groups may ask your students to cater an after-school meeting. We have prepared sandwiches and baked cookies for community functions, CEA meetings, in-school showers, administrative meetings.
13. Showcase your program. Our Superintendent of Schools often dines with us. We invite community groups and senior citizens to join us from time to time to enjoy and celebrate the work of our caterers.